

# The joy of sweating while searching



**JIM CARROLL**  
DIGITAL SURVIVOR

**L**ike many people, I continually struggle with how to keep up with issues of technology, e-biz and e-commerce and the Internet.

In a world evolving so quickly, I've got to find instant information relevant to any topic, issue, company, person or industry I might be dealing with.

Over the years, I've found two powerful ways of managing the information in my working life.

The first involves a little known but fabulously powerful software program; the second involves some sweat.

For years, I've been a huge fan of askSam, which might best be characterized as an information management program (<http://www.asksam.com>). The company has recently released a new version (askSam 4.0) that is extremely fast and has loads of new features.

Basically, I feed into askSam much of the electronic information that I generate and collect. The best example is e-mail — askSam lets me instantly find any e-mail message that I might have sent or received since 1984. That's right, some 16 years of stuff.

It makes for a very powerful and useful tool. If someone calls me on a business issue, I can quickly browse through any communications I might have had with them to get up to date. AskSam works with e-mail from many popular programs such as Microsoft Outlook, Eudora and others.

But it isn't restricted to e-mail — you can create an askSam data base of your other electronic documents. I've used it to create a searchable index of almost every word processing document I've

So how can you keep up to date with new information? That's where the sweat comes in. It's the season of resolutions, and many people are deciding to deal with the results of Christmas dining excess. If you're in that boat, there is an opportunity to combine a fitness program with on-line information.

I began using an exercise bike on a regular basis about five years ago. From the first day, I found the process to be extremely boring — so boring that I couldn't stay on it for long. Then I set up a PC and monitor near the bike, and built a little table over the handlebars for a keyboard and mouse.

I can now work away for an hour or more, and plow through several dozen information Web sites on the issues that are important to me — and barely notice the time go by. I'm achieving two goals — getting a good workout, and keeping myself informed on matters important to my business.

But while I was creating my own Internet-equipped exercise equipment, a revolution in the world of health clubs was underway. Anyone who regularly works out at a club has observed that plenty of exercise equipment is becoming linked to the Internet.

Perhaps the best example is Netpulse ([www.netpulse.net](http://www.netpulse.net)), which boasts that it has the "world's largest Internet media network serving upscale, active-lifestyle consumers."

The company makes a wide variety of high-end exercise equipment, and outfits it with everything you need to keep engrossed while working out. You can surf the Web, send and receive e-mail, or watch TV. Rather than selling it to individual consumers, the company seeks to market it to health clubs across North America.

For couch potatoes everywhere, there might be hope yet, whether they choose to work out in their home or in the comfort of a high-end health club.

*Jim Carroll is co-author of Light*